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INFO RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE
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SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA (BEN-YEHUDA)
TREASURY FOR MAUREEN WAFER

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [ASEC](#) [HA](#)
SUBJECT: HAITIANS PONDER A PREVAL PRESIDENCY

¶1. (SBU) Summary: With the Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) having announced preliminary results on the evening of February 9 showing that Rene Preval had a considerable lead, Haitians across the political spectrum are concluding that Rene Preval has won the presidency and coming to grips with that eventuality. Calls for acceptance of the results and for dialogue and national reconciliation are coming from international and national sectors alike. While waiting expectantly for official results, Haitians have maintained a calm and satisfied attitude, proud of the large turnout and the peaceful conclusion of the first round. The national media has played a large role in contributing to this celebratory atmosphere, continuing to focus on congratulatory messages to the Haitian people from home and abroad. The growing list of endorsements of the process from observer groups has added to the already solid conclusion formed on February 8 that the outcome of the elections would be credible. Only Charles Henry Baker, who appears to be running closely behind Leslie Manigat for the second spot, has publicly raised the issue of disputes: Baker told Polcouns on February 9 that he would contest irregular voting lists, but stated that he would only challenge the result through legal channels. As normally happens in Haiti, those opposed to Preval are circulating worrying rumors about pro-Preval celebrations in the event of a first round victory, or protests in the event of a second round runoff. Post believes that MINUSTAH is well-able to contain any potentially violent reaction to the election results, as it proved on election day. End Summary.

Results so far

¶2. (U) The CEP announced partial results with approximately 15 percent of the returns tabulated. The leading presidential candidates by those Departments reporting were:

West-31 percent reporting.	(Port-au-Prince and environs)
Preval	68 percent
Manigat	14 percent
Chavanne Jeune	5 percent
Baker	5 percent

Center-1 percent reporting.	(Hinche)
Baker	29 percent
Preval	27 percent

Manigat 11 percent

Southeast-2 percent reporting. (Jacmel)

Preval 47 percent

Jeune 18 percent

Baker 9 percent

Manigat 8 percent

South-7 percent reporting. (Les Cayes)

Preval 35 percent

Jeune 27 percent

Manigat 13 percent

Baker 6 percent

Artibonite-6 percent reporting. (Gonaives)

Preval 50 percent

Manigat 25 percent

Luc Mesidieu 9 percent

Baker 5 percent

A CEP press conference is scheduled for 1830 hours this evening, February 10, to provide further partial results. The CEP has announced that approximately 43 percent of the returns will be provided at that time.

The Sun Shines on Haiti

13. (SBU) Despite some frustration with the slowness of the vote tabulation, Haitians have maintained the calm and celebratory attitude that marked the closing of the polls on February 7. Haitians continue to exhibit national pride over the large turnout, which MINUSTAH officials estimate is over 60%, and the exemplary behavior of their countrymen despite the initial disorganization of the electoral process. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and OAS Secretary General

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Insulza were among the first international leaders to commend Haiti on the successful election. Secretary of State Rice's February 9 congratulatory statement has received wide and repeated media coverage.

14. (U) IFES, Elections Canada-led International Mission for Monitoring Haitian Elections (MIEEH), and the EU Observation Mission have made preliminary statements commenting on the massive voter turnout, the enthusiasm of voters, and the transparency of the process. Each mission has noted various technical deficiencies but generally concluded that the problems and errors committed do not undermine the credibility of the process and can be corrected prior to the second round.

15. (SBU) The Haitian National Council for Election Observation (CNO) dispatched 8000-plus observers throughout the country on election day. CNO chief Leopold Berlangier's initial public comments were positive noting the transparency of the process and the lack of political violence. He praised his fellow Haitians for their civic-mindedness and patriotism for the unprecedented election day numbers. The CNO will present the CEP with formal recommendations for improving the process. The NDI-sponsored National Observation Network (RON) also fielded observers, political party "mandataires," throughout Haiti. RON is conducting a "slow count" of the results. The quantitative data gathered is being evaluated by international elections experts to ensure a scientifically-based sample size. NDI officials told poloff that the slow count results will be within a 2 percent margin of error. The RON board will present this final quantitative data to the CEP in a sealed envelope as a check on the tabulation process in the event the tabulation is challenged. RON is also preparing a qualitative report which is expected to generally reflect the same deficiencies and positive aspects mentioned by the other observers missions.

Baker Not Conceding

16. (SBU) After venting about political fraud and outlining

his determination to continue fighting, Charles Henri Baker told polcouns he would work to help his country build institutions "no mater what the result" of the election. Baker conceded that the high turnout and peaceful atmosphere will contribute to the ultimate result. He also did not disagree that the result will be the will of the people.

Comment

17. (SBU) Tabulation delays are beginning to cause quiet grumbling that could begin to mar the celebratory atmosphere. The challenge for the post-first round period will be to focus on the legislative races (30 Senators and 99 Deputies) around the country. The Parliament will need to be strengthened as an institution itself and through political party development and promotion of a responsible opposition. The international community shall continue to speak with one voice to encourage acceptance of the election results and nudge Haitian politicians and leaders to work together toward national unity. End comment.

CARNEY